2006 CALFED Science Conference
Power Point Presentation Guidelines

The 2006 CALFED Science Conference will include 2 ½ days of concurrent sessions.

- **Audience:** The audience will be made up of scientists, engineers, managers, and stakeholders working on Bay-Delta Program related issues.
- **Timing of presentations:**
  - All presentations during the concurrent sessions will be giving on 20 minute time intervals. Since there will be 5 concurrent sessions, it is critical that all sessions stay on time, so that participants can move between the different sessions. The session chairs have been asked to strictly enforce the 20 minute time interval.
  - Each presenter will have 15 minutes to speak and 3 minutes for questions and 2 minutes for introduction/changing of speakers.
    - Green Light (Presentation) - A timing light will appear green for the first fifteen minutes of your time slot.
    - Yellow Light (Questions) - When the light turns yellow, you are expected to wrap-up quickly, then let the session chair ask for questions (if there is time).
    - Red Light (End of Time Period) - When the light turns red, your time period is up. At this point the session chair will break in and introduce the next speaker.
  - Please adhere to your time period. Don't make your session moderator take "police action" against you!
- **Speaker Prep Room (Room 309)** – The speaker prep room will be open for the duration of the conference (8 AM – 5 PM). Speakers can use the room to review their presentations and/or meet with their session chairs. Back-up equipment (laptops, flash drives, CD's, etc), will be available for check-out by speakers and session chairs at the registration desk.
- **Presentation Guidelines** – General tips for giving a good power point presentation are included below.

Power Point Presentation Tips

Slide Composition

- Dark colored background with light colored text projects much better than light backgrounds with dark text.
- Make sure you can read your slides when projected from 70 feet in a partially darkened room.
- Limit each slide to one main idea.
- Use several simple slides rather than one complicated one.

- Use duplicate slides if you need to refer to the same slide at several points during your talk.
- Plan your slides for good visual pace.

Basic organization

1. **Title slide -** Title of talk (2 lines max), presenter's name, organizational credits, date and location of presentation
2. **Body slides** - Depends on content (text, images, graphs). Use same type-face & color scheme.
3. **Summary slide** - Use 1 or 2 slides to sum up your central message.
   - CALFED Science Program will be producing brief summaries of all of the presentations at the 2006 CALFED Science Conference. These "presentations digests" will provide brief, distilled summaries of the information presented during the oral program and will be posted on the CALFED Science Conference website by January 2007. In order to ensure timely completion of the presentation digests, Science Program would like each presenter to provide 3-5 bullets that summarize the major take-home points of the presentation.
4. **Finish slides** - Use 1 or 2 slides can be a "thank you for you attention" or "staff acknowledgements" or a pretty sunset. Creates closure, professionalism.

How many slides do I show?

- Rule of thumb: # of minutes – 10%, then round down.
- 15 min – (10%) = 15 – 1.5 = 13.5 slides
- Give more time for data, less for text. Between 1 – 2 min. per slide.

Text slides are good for:

- Making bullet statements of central message or summary points
- Stating hypotheses or test predictions
- Outlining highlights or research protocol
- Summarizing methods of data collection
- Citing seminal works or quotes

Text tips

- Use bullet statements or an outline
- Use 5 lines with 5 words per line
- Choose light text on a dark background
- Avoid red type
- Choose an easy-to-read font: Times, Arial, Courier
- Use a font as large as slide will allow
- Avoid all caps—it's harder to read
- Use 1.5 line spacing
- Check ALL spelling!

Tables
- Good for showing specific data values
- Don't show a table of tiny words and numbers
- Condense the data to what is relevant
- Use no more than 4 columns and 3 lines
- Simplify column headings

Images: Photos
- Can be used to make your point
- Good for Methods section
- Break up the monotony of text and graphics
- Good for showing research assistants
- Use as "eye candy" for finish slides
- Use only high-quality photos with good color and contrast
- Lighter photos are more successful than darker ones

Images: Illustrations
- Copies from textbooks or blueprints are usually illegible
- Make a thick-line tracing of essentials; i.e. re-create a simpler version of the original

Graphs
- Effective graphs will clarify your findings at a glance.
- Poor graphs will leave your audience confused.
- Limit the amount of information in each graph.
- Decide what type of graph is best for the type of data presented.
- Types of Graphs
  - **Flow charts** - Summarize how several variables interact, good for methods section
  - **Schematic diagrams** - Good for showing piece equipment
  - **Bar graphs** –
    - compare 2 or 3 subjects for 2 or 3 variables
    - "stacked" bar-graph good for expressing proportions of a whole
  - **Line graphs** - display change over time, 3 lines (data series) is the limit for one graph
  - **Pie charts**
    - present proportions of the whole
    - two together allow comparison (like stacked bar graphs)
    - better for more than 2 series than stacked bar graphs
    - present no more than 2 per slide
- Color with graphs
  - Use bold, clear colors

- o Use colors consistently
- o Light on dark is better than dark on light
- o Color is easier to follow than symbol markers on line graphs

Techniques for giving your talk

Prepare in general

- What is my topic?
- What day am I speaking?
- What time am I speaking?
- Where and in what room am I speaking?
- Who is my Session chair?
- How and when will I load my presentation onto my session chair's computer?
- What are the size and layout of the presentation room?
  - o The rooms are approximately 45 feet wide by 67 feet long, seating approximately 280 people theater style at the 2006 CALFED Science Conference.
- How long will I have to talk?
  - o You will have 15 minutes to talk at the 2006 CALFED Science Conference
- How much time for questions?
  - o You will have 3-5 minutes for questions at the 2006 CALFED Science Conference
- Will there be other talks on similar or related subjects?
- At what point in the program will your talk be given?

Define your central message

- The best presentations make just one point, loudly and clearly.
- Do your best to develop a summary of your work that you can state in 25 words or less, using plain English.

To organize your talk:

- Use introduction, methods, results, discussion/conclusions/significance segments
- Consider the central message in every segment
- Indicate why anyone should care about your findings
- Use simple, direct, active words.
- Your primary purpose for giving the scientific talk is to inform or instruct.
- Your topic is defined within the context of the rest of the program and within your invitation to speak.
- Your depth and scope of content is determined by the audience profile and the time given for you to speak.

To clarify your talk:

- Keep the non-technical language as straightforward and uncomplicated as possible
- Simplify your phrases
- Tighten your sentences
- Never use a long word when a short one will do
- If you can delete a word without losing meaning, delete it.
- Use equations, math, and symbols sparingly and carefully
- Scientific talks contain many facts and data, so SUMMARIZE. Summaries can be done as you progress or at the end. Visual summaries are particularly effective.

To generating excitement and interest, ask:

- Why would other scientists be interested?
- How can I generate excitement for my subject in someone without knowledge and involvement?
- How might other disciplines or other research areas within my own discipline use this information?
- Is there a research or teaching anecdote I could include for emphasis, added interest or humor?

How to use your voice

- Speak slowly and clearly
- Modulate your voice: somewhere between monotone and sing-song
- Look up and make eye contact periodically
- Work hard to eliminate nervous sounds (uh, um)
- Emphasize certain words to get your meaning across

Style of delivery: to read or ad-lib?

- Some recommend reading along word for word with text slides
- Others prefer an outline format while you provide more complete verbal accompaniment.
- Do what feels natural to YOU.
- **If you read**:
  - Try to make it as natural as possible
  - Write the text in short, uncomplicated sentences.
  - Avoid jargon and fancy verbiage
  - Read verbatim, don't change the wording
  - Additionally,
    - You MUST walk your audience through the graphs in the Results section
    - Tell them the important point
    - Make it clear how this fits into your central message

- **If you prefer note-free (ad-libbing):**
  - o This approach is often more engaging for the audience
  - o Let the slides cue your speech
  - o You must really know your material well
  - o You will almost have memorized your slide order
  - o Be careful about exceeding your time frame

Adhere to your time frame

- Don't make your session moderator take "police action" against you!
- To assure success in this area…practice, practice, practice.

Practice, practice, practice

- Rehearse with accessories (microphone, pointer, screen)
- Try it out on your peers, family, pets, in the mirror, videotape
- Practice early to accommodate revisions
- If it's too long – don't talk faster – cut something out.